

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 201532 TOSEC 100114

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FOLLOWING REPEAT LISBON 4841 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 23 AUG

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S E C R E T LISBON 4841

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-2-4

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: AIRLIFT FROM ANGOLA TO PORTUGAL; POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

REFS: LISBON 4836 AND 4796

SUMMARY: MILITARY AIDE TO PRESIDENT TODAY FOLLOWED UP WITH ME
ON PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR AIRLIFT FOR ANGOLAN REFUGEES. I
REMINDED HIM OF MY STRONG POLITICAL DEMARCHE TO PRESIDENT
YESTERDAY AND MY INSISTENCE THAT WE NOT DEAL WITH GONCALVES
GOVERNMENT. SAID WE WOULD OF COURSE MOVE AHEAD BUT AID WOULD
BE MUCH MORE RAPID AND RECEIVE MORE PUBLIC SUPPORT IN US IF
PRESIDENT WERE TO CHANGE GOVERNMENTS ON THE SCHEDULE (TUESDAY)
CALDAS HAD ORIGINALLY GIVEN US (LISBON 4836). CALDAS
INDICATED THAT OUR DEMARCHE HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE AND THE PRESIDENT
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HAD MADE "ANOTHER" EFFORT WITH VASCO GONCALVES THIS MORNING TO

GET HIM TO RESIGN. END SUMMARY.

1. MAJOR ANTONIO CALDAS, MILITARY AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY TO FERREIRA DA CUNHA, CALLED ON ME AT 6:00 P.M. AUGUST 23 AT DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT. PURPOSE WAS TO FOLLOW UP ON MY CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT ON ANGOLAN AIRLIFT. CALDAS SAID PRESIDENT HAD MADE SIMILAR REQUESTS TO ENGLISH, FRENCH AND USSR. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD ENGLAND AND FRANCE HAD RESPONDED WITH SYMBOLIC AID BUT WAS NOT AWARE OF SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST. CALDAS SAID SOVIETS HAD NOT YET RESPONDED TO PRESIDENT'S REQUEST. COMMUNIQUE HAD BEEN PUT OUT BY PRESIDENCY THIS MORNING ON REQUEST TO ALL FOUR COUNTRIES.

2. CALDAS SAID THAT PRESIDENT WANTED TO LET ME KNOW THAT HE WAS DELIGHTED WITH OUR POSITIVE RESPONSE. CALDAS, WHO HAS BEEN A GOOD DATT CONTACT FOR SOME TIME, SAID HE WAS PERSONALLY PLEASED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN OPERATION WHICH WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE THE AMERICAN IMAGE IN PORTUGAL.

3. I TOLD CALDAS THAT I HAD GIVEN SOME MORE THOUGHT TO THE AIRLIFT OPERATION. AS HE WAS OBVIOUSLY AWARE, I HAD MADE CLEAR TO THE PRESIDENT THAT I DID NOT WANT TO WORK WITH THE VASCO GONCALVES GOVERNMENT. CALDAS SAID THE PRESIDENT HAD AGREED, THAT WAS WHY HE HAD DESIGNATED FERREIRA DA CUNHA AND HIMSELF AS THE FOCAL POINT ON THE AIRLIFT. I SAID I APPRECIATED THEIR EFFORTS BUT IN AN OPERATION OF THIS MAGNITUDE IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE EASIER IF WE HAD A GOVERNMENT WITH WHICH WE COULD WORK. AMERICAN AID COULD BE FACILITATED IF THE RESPONSE MECHANISM IN PORTUGAL ENTAILED MORE THAN THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET. I REMINDED CALDAS THAT HE TOLD USE THE PRESIDENT INTENDED TO CHANGE GOVERNMENTS BY TUESDAY (LISBON 4796). WHILE WE WERE OBVIOUSLY GOING TO GO FORWARD, OUR AID WOULD CERTAINLY COME MORE RAPIDLY IF THIS CHANGE PROCEEDED ON SCHEDULE.

4. CALDAS SAID HE UNDERSTOOD MY POINT. HE ADDED THAT AS A RESULT OF MY DEMARCHE TO THE PRESIDENT YESTERDAY, THE PRESIDENT "HAD MADE ANOTHER ATTEMPT THIS MORNING WITH A CERTAIN PERSON." (CALDAS'S MEANING WAS UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR. THE PRESIDENT HAD AGAIN ASKED VASCO GONCALVES TO RESIGN.)

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5. CALDAS THEN REVIEWED AIRLIFT FIGURES WITH ME (SEPTTEL). AS HE WAS LEAVING I AGAIN REMINDED HIM THAT WE WERE NOT RESCINDING OUR OFFER BUT AIRLIFT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER IF WE HAD A NEW GOVERNMENT. QUITE FRANKLY, I SAID, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL LOOK UPON TH AIRLIFT AS AID TO A COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT UNLESS CERTAIN CHANGES ARE MADE. CALDAS ASSURED ME HE UNDERSTOOD

THIS AND WOULD CONVEY IT TO THE PRESIDENT.

6. COMMENT: CALDAS'S OBSERVATION THAT MY DEMARCHE HELPED

PROVOKETHE PRESIDENT'S INTO ASKING AGAIN FOR VASCO GONCALVES'S RESIGNATION IS THE FIRST I HAVE HEARD THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS ACTUALLY MADE SUCH DIRECT REQUESTS. APPARENTLY, VASCO HAS PREVIOUSLY JUST SAID NO AND GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT. THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION UNDERSCORES POINT MADE TO ME EARLIER TODAY BY ALVES AND CRESPO (SEPTTEL) ON THE NEED TO GET EUROPEANS TO MAKE SIMILAR DEMARCHE. MY EXPERIENCE WITH LOCAL AMBASSADORS CONVINCES ME THAT ONLY WAY TO DO THIS IS IN RESPECTIVE CAPITALS. TO BE EFFECTIVE THIS MUST BE DONE AS SON AS POSSIBLE. TIME IS NOW RUNNING AGAINST ANTUNES GROUP AND THEY KNOW IT.

7. AS FAR AS AIRLIFT IS CONCERNED I STRONGLY URGE WE MOVE FORWARD RAPIDLY. WE HAVE THE JUMP ON THE SOVIETS, ANTUNES SUPPORT THE AIRLIFT, PARTICULARLY ITS ASSOCIATION WITH COSTA GOMES AND WE HAVE EXERCISED THE PRESSURE THEY WANTED ON COSTA GOMES. IF HE STILL FAILS TO COME THROUGH BY TUESDAY, WE WILL NOT BE IN OPERATION BY THEN AND CAN ALWAYS THROW UP SOME BUREAUCRATIC OBSTACLES WHOSA SIGNIFICANCE WILL NOT BE LOST ON COSTA GOMES.
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